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ABSTRACT

One hundred fifty human resource professionals responded to survey questions on communication effectiveness within their business organizations. Their responses on formal and informal communication patterns, communicating change, small group communication, and superior-subordinate communication were supplemented by interviews with 58 professionals. Findings included the following: (1) respondents perceived upward communication as least effective, reflecting, perhaps, current interest in participatory management and decentralization; (2) they saw downward and horizontal communication as the dominant forms of formal communication; (3) 91% reported a great degree of change in their organizations, ranging from mergers to the relocation of employees; (4) 59% rated communication information about changes as somewhat or very effective; (5) 74% rated communication in small group settings as either somewhat or very effective; and (6) 32.7% found superior-subordinate communication somewhat ineffective while 51.3% found it somewhat effective. With few exceptions, no clear differences appeared in the responses of professionals who did or did not conduct inservice communication training programs. Communication training programs could help business organizations in their shift to horizontal communication patterns. (Tables quantifying questionnaire results are appended.) (MM)

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HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS' REPORT ON COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN THEIR ORGANIZATIONS

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HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS' REPORT ON COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN THEIR ORGANIZATIONS

One hundred and fifty human resource professionals responded to survey questions concerning: (1) formal and informal communication, (2) communicating change, (3) small group communication, (4) superior-subordinate communication. Findings include: (1) upward communication ineffective and horizontal communication increasing, (2) change is extensive and communication about it poor, (3) disagreement and communicating negative information are discouraged.

During two decades as a communication consultant, I have gradually formed the conclusion that a kind of tunnel vision afflicts line managers when we discuss their "communication problems." The average manager would rather admit to chronic alcoholism than to having communication problems. Just why communication difficulties are such an embarrassment is not clear. Perhaps it's because line managers are so task-oriented that the human relationship and communication aspects of their organizations simply escape their attention. Or, because communication is so closely linked to the "I" and "Me" that ego-defensiveness blocks the acknowledgement of communication failures. This seems borne out by the fact that managers readily admit to problems in such ego-enhancing areas as stress ("I'm under enormous pressure") or time management ("I'm always so damn busy").

We can account for this tunnel vision, in part, by recalling the effects of specialization and division of labor on the human perceptual system. Each organizational member tends to perceive and interpret events from the narrow perspective of his or her own cubicle in the organizational pyramid. Wofford, Gerloff, and Cummins observe that:

> We simultaneously and unavoidably create differentiated organizational units when we divide work to create formal organizational units. It is only to be expected that people in such differentiated units will have somewhat different goals and orientations. They see things differently, do things differently, and sometimes hold different values and norms. (p. 369)

Thus, the problem of most surveys of organizational communication practices is that the restricted perspective of many of the respondents is not considered when reporting and interpreting results. In selecting a population for the present research, my aim was to find a broader, less restricted perspective.

My basic assumption was that "people whose work requires them to respond to system-wide human resource problems might perceive communication processes

in a less restricted and distorted manner." People in areas of human resource development are probably afflicted with their own varieties of tunnel vision, but the nature of their responsibilities requires them to maintain system-wide contracts, so their perceptual fields are probably broadened in the process. This seemed particularly likely for training and personnel professionals who must engage in ongoing needs analysis throughout an organization. After interviewing 58 training and personnel staff members throughout the country, I found that they are indeed more likely to see the organization as a whole than are line supervisors and managers. Their responses to a questionnaire and in the interviews reflected a sensitivity to process, an understanding of human communication, and a wholistic view of the organization that I did not detect among those line managers, supervisors, and employees I have worked with in the past.

As a college teacher, I know that I need an understanding of "what's really going on in the business world" if my courses in interpersonal and organizational communication are to have any practical value for the students. As the author of the 1982 textbook, Communicating on the Job, I was especially curious to test the assumption that the central concepts I had developed academically are relevant to the situations college students are likely to encounter. After considerable thought and anguish on my part, and some excellent analytical work by my research associate, Jodi Bengloff,* we concluded that the substance of my "on the job" research could be boiled down to four concept areas:

*Jodi Bengloff, a graduate student at State University of New York, College at Brockport, rendered valuable assistance in the design of the survey instrument and in organizing the data for analysis.

1. Formal and informal system-wide network communication
2. Communication to facilitate change
3. Small group communication
4. Superior-subordinate communication and the resulting "organizational climate."

A fifty-two-item questionnaire was designed to probe human resource professionals' perceptions of ongoing communication practices as they related to the four concept areas. The format was modeled on a variation of the Communication Audit developed by the International Communication Association. The questionnaire asks for minimal demographic data, plus three kinds of communication problem analysis:

1. Frequency of an event (a five-step range from "Almost Never" to "Almost Always")
2. Extent or degree of a phenomenon (a four-step range from "Very Little" to "Very Great")
3. Value judgment of overall effectiveness within a concept area (a four-step range from "Very Ineffective" to "Very Effective")

The midpoint of "Same" was eliminated from the "degree" scales to reduce the midrange response bias.

A sample of 416 names was drawn from the 1982 membership list of the Organizational Development Division of the American Society for Training and Development. It was assumed that ASTD members in the human resources areas would most probably belong to this division. Subsequent analyses of demographic data proved this assumption to be about 95% accurate. A combination of cluster and random sampling was used. The cluster sample consisted of all Organizational Development Division members whose organizations were located in the 20 cities

that had been selected for on-site interviews. The cluster sample numbered 202. The remaining 214 names were obtained by selecting every tenth name from the alphabetical list of divisional membership. If a name in the cluster sample fell into the tenth slot, the next name was selected. The sample constituted 12% of divisional membership.

In late March, 1983, 416 questionnaires were mailed out with a cover letter urging participation in the research project. Two reminder letters were sent; the last one in late April contained another copy of the questionnaire, plus an addressed stamped envelope. Eighteen questionnaires came back as "Addressee Unknown", reducing the actual sample to 398. One hundred and fifty of the 398 persons returned questionnaires, for a return rate of 37.7%. From the questionnaire responses, I developed a standardized interview format to probe for more details in the four concept areas. A total of 58 interviews were conducted in 20 cities: Cincinnati, Louisville, Nashville, Memphis, New Orleans, Houston, San Antonio, El Paso, Phoenix, San Francisco, San Bruno (California), Oakland, Eugene (Oregon), Portland (Oregon), Corvallis (Oregon), Minneapolis, Milwaukee, LaCrosse (Wisconsin), Sheboygan (Wisconsin), and Rochester (New York). The organizations included high-technology electronics, retail store chains, banks, electric power, gas pipeline, oil, insurance, foods, consumer products, industrial products and services, heavy industry, munitions, newspapers, areospace, and consultant firms.

RESULTS

Section one dealt with formal and informal network communication. The questionnaire stated:

> Messages move through your organization in several directions--upward, downward, or horizontally (between units at the same level). This section deals with how communication moves through channels in your organization. Please circle the response which best describes your perception of the day-to-day communication in your organization.

(Insert Table 1 About Here)

Table 1 summarizes the responses to questions relating to overall perceptions of four general types of network communication. The four response categories were: "Very Ineffective," "Somewhat Ineffective," "Somewhat Effective," "Very Effective." Combining percentages of total responses for the "somewhat" and "very" effective categories, we get a rough estimate of perceived overall effectiveness. In rank order of effectiveness, the results are:

1. Formal horizontal (84.6%)
2. Formal downward (82.7%)
3. Informal horizontal (75.3%)
4. Formal upward (64.0%)

These results verify the ascendancy of horizontal communication that I perceived in my interviews. Today's business climate has brought on great interest in participatory management, decentralization (to the point of setting up companies within the company), quality circles, and project teams.

One result was not very surprising--the perceived ineffectiveness of upward communication, even losing out to the informal network. In spite of all those sophisticated gadgets to gather, sort, store, and distribute information, the technologists apparently still have not solved the human problems that prevent water from flowing upstream. This is especially true of water laden with that dangerous pollutant--"negative information." Several of these "bad news" items were explored in section four of the questionnaire (superi-

or-subordinate communication). Some of these results appear in Table 2. A glance at Table 2 provides an illustration of how bad news fails to move upward in hierarchical organizations.

(Insert Table 2 About Here)

From Table 3, we can conclude that managers do tend to respond to messages sent upward, but we can't determine from our data whether such responses are likely to encourage or discourage subsequent attempts by employees to communicate uphill. This is an important point, since almost 43% of our respondents perceived management to be doing little or very little to encourage upward communication.

(Insert Table 3 About Here)

My interviews also verified the generally assumed fact that downward and horizontal communication are the dominant forms of formal communication. This was true even though a majority of the 58 people interviewed did discuss attempts being made to improve upward communication. In fact, improvement of upward communication was often identified as a high priority item in the organizations I visited. Attempts to improve upward communication included quality circles, project management groups, participatory management seminars, communication training for managers and supervisors, and a reward system for suggestions communicated upward.

Responses concerning the two dominant forms of communication (horizontal and downward) are summarized in Table 4. The results indicate no clear cut superiority for either form of communication with respect to timeliness, clarity, perceived accuracy, or likelihood of getting a response. These re-

sults are consistent with those obtained on the effectiveness ratings mentioned earlier (horizontal 84.6% and downward 82.7%). Respondents tended to perceive horizontal and downward communication as being about equally effective. However, this finding is in marked contrast to the dominance of downward communication which is consistently reported in published research.

(Insert Table 4 About Here)

Section two of the questionnaire sought to collect impressions of the quality of communication that preceded, accompanied, or followed one or more of six types of organizational change. The types of change listed on the questionnaire were: product or service, policy, employee-related (such as new programs, lay offs, hiring, benefits), operating procedures, organization, other. The introduction to section two contained this statement.

> Change is a fact of organizational life. Organizations may add new products or services, make policy adjustments, modify operating procedures, institute new employee programs, and so on. This section concerns the changes which may be taking place in your organization, and the communication of information about those changes.

The four response categories used in this section were: "Very Little," "Little," "Great," and "Very Great." The middle category of "some" was eliminated to lessen the influence of the midrange response bias.

The extent of change reported was truly astounding. 91% of respondents reported either a "great" or "very great" degree of change occurring in their organizations. The extent and variety of changes is illustrated in Table 5. Over 78% of the organizations were undergoing three or more kinds of change simultaneously. Some of the responses to the "other" category included "hiring freeze," "industry de-regulation," "merger," "relocation of half of employees," "parent company holding tighter rein of control than ever before," "shift of

resources," "change in top officers," "founder and former chairman of the board resigned in disgust," "conversion," "automation," and "goals and values." Such changes are hardly minor. How good was the communication about all this change?

(Insert Table 5 About Here)

Overall, almost 59% of respondents rated communication of information about "changes" as "very" or "somewhat" effective. Only 8.7% rated it as "very effective." To pinpoint the kinds of information about change that organizational members appeared to be lacking, a ratio was calculated for information received versus information needed. Respondents were asked to give two kinds of responses for four kinds of information about change. The four kinds of information about change are listed in Table 6. The two possible responses were: (1) "this is the amount of information needed" (2) "this is the amount of information actually received." "Amount" was estimated on a four-step scale ranging from "one" (very little) to "four" (very great). An arithmetic mean was calculated for the "needed" and "received" categories of responses for each of the four kinds of information about change. Using the "average received" as the numerator and the "average needed" as the denominator, an estimate of <u>over</u> - or <u>under</u>-communication of information about change was derived. Any value greater than "one" would indicate over-communication. Any value less than "one" would indicate under-communication. The results of this analysis appear in Table 6.

The ratio for all four types of change indicate a marked tendency to <u>under</u>-communicate information. Not surprisingly, the largest perceived gap

concerned information about the two changes that most directly affect individuals in the organization (see questions #27 and #28, Table 6).

(Insert Table 6 About Here)

Section three of the questionnaire stated:

> This section deals with the face-to-face communication between members of small work groups of approximately 3 to 15 people. Examples of such groups are committees, manager-staff groups, project teams, task forces, or small departments. Please circle the response which best describes your perception of the day-to-day communication exchanges between members of such groups.

Given the business community's widely reported negative feelings about committee meetings, staff meetings, and similar group processes, I was surprised that 74% of our respondents rated "communication in small group settings" as either "somewhat" or "very" effective. Perhaps the broader definition of small group communication led to assessing somewhat different phenomena than those usually addressed in studies of committee meetings and small group problem-solving. However, the overall positive evaluation of small group communication is moderately contradicted by more specific assessments of small group processes. Table 7 summarizes evaluations of group meetings in terms of three criteria: preplanning, productivity, and implementation of group decisions by members. The actual questions asked were: "How frequently--

1. Are group meetings well-planned?
2. Are group meetings productive?
3. Are group decisions actually implemented by group members?"

The pattern that emerges here is not quite as positive as the 74% overall effectiveness rating. If we sum the percentages for the "almost never" and "sometimes" categories of response, we get strong to moderately negative evaluations from a substantial minority of the respondents for all three criterial

areas: planning, 30.6% negative; productivity, 36.6% negative; implementation, 27.3% negative.

(Insert Table 7 About Here)

Another possible negative indicator can be found in the responses to the question "To what extent is it easy for group members to openly disagree?" Over 37% responded to this question with "very little" or "little." Janis and others have emphasized the role of constructive critical thinking and dissent in group processes.

Overall, the respondents' wholistic evaluation of small group processes is more positive than one would expect from examining their evaluations of specific aspects of small group communication.

Section four addressed the sensitive area of superior-subordinate relationships. During the interviews, respondents indicated that they experienced the most difficult with this part of the questionnaire. They attributed this difficulty, in part, to what they perceived to be the wide variations in supervisory and managerial styles in their organizations. During the interviews, I emphasized that this section was meant to focus on organizational climate as it is created by the quality of superior-subordinate relationships all up and down the line; and I requested the most "typical" or "usual" situations. The questionnaire did not include this degree of orientation, containing only this brief introductory statement:

> This section concerns person-to-person communication between subordinates and <u>immediate</u> superiors. Please circle the responses which best describe these communication exchanges.

Since the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire emphasized that human resource professionals had been selected as the sample population because of

their tendency to have a system-wide perspective, it is probable that respondents did attempt to generalize for the whole organization. Keep these provisos in mind, when examining the results that follow.

When asked to rate the overall effectiveness of communication between subordinates and their immediate superiors, the sample responded as follows: very ineffective, 2%; somewhat ineffective, 32.7%; somewhat effective, 51.3%; and very effective, 14%. While this is an overall positive evaluation, almost 35% of our respondents reported some degree of deficiency in superior-subordinate communication. An examination of responses to several specific questions will help to pinpoint some of these areas of deficiency.

When discussing network communication earlier, we used two questions from section four to illustrate that bad news tends not to travel upward in the organizations sampled. The most striking statistic in Table 2 is the 78% probability that subordinates will not give feedback to their superiors concerning superiors' mistakes. In terms of Luft's Johari window, managers' blind areas are likely to balloon in such situations to the point where managers are indeed, "flying blind." The consequences of "flying blind" in today's business climate include the not improbable option of a crash landing.

(Insert Table 8 About Here)

Responses to several other questions fall into about the same range of an overall positive evaluation. Some of these results are summarized in Table 8. The results indicate that supervisors and managers tend to communicate quite effectively when responding to employees' questions and suggestions. However, in response to a related question about how much help superiors give to subordinates concerning their problems and complaints, almost 39% of the sample

estimated the extent of such help to be "very little" or "little." This apparent contradiction can be explained in part by examining the two questions more carefully. Question 39, dealing with "questions and suggestions," implies that the employee is seeking help to do his or her job better, thus potentially benefiting the company. The question about problems and complaints, however, appears to focus on getting help for the employee to somehow benefit him or her. If we can accept these interpretations of the two questions, the apparent contradiction may not be real, since superiors are more likely to respond positively to subordinates' requests that might benefit the company than to those that might benefit only one employee.

The tendency in work organizations to downplay the importance of employees' feelings and needs is illustrated by the responses to question 40. Over 41% of our sample saw some need for improvement in superiors "being aware of subordinates' feelings and needs." A number of studies in leadership and organizational behavior have indicated how a balanced emphasis on the task and social maintenance dimensions of leadership can increase, not only morale, but also productivity and quality. Apparently, this message has not yet "sunken in," in spite of two decades of Blake and Mouton's "managerial grid."

One message, however, appears to have registered: "LISTEN, DON'T EVALUATE!" Ralph Nichols, (a noted authority on listening) would be happy to learn that only 15% of our sample reported that superiors "very often" or "almost always" respond by arguing instead of listening when a subordinate disagrees. So, congratulations Ralph; it took almost 30 years of research and consulting, but somehow you prevailed! Of course, we still have to work on that 21.3% in the "often" category, but that's fuel for the human resource professional's missionary work.

One final line of analysis, not reported in full here, compared the responses of those who did conduct communication training programs in their organizations to those who did not. With few exceptions, there were no clear cut differences between the "did" and "did not" groups. The exceptions follow.

1. When asked, "When messages are sent horizontally, does the receiver respond to the message?" the combined percentages for the "very often" and "almost always" response categories were:
   a. "Did" group -- 54.8%
   b. "Did Not" group -- 42.8%
2. When asked to rate the effectiveness of formal downward communication, 86% of the "Did" group rate it as "Somewhat" or "Very Effective," as compared to 71.5% for the "Did Not" group. A similar kind of rating for informal communication yielded 79.1% for the "Did" group and 62.9% for the "Did Not" group.
3. As to communication of information on how individuals could actively participate in the change process, the "Did" group registered a "received" to "needed" information ratio of.79, compared to.61 for the "Did Not" group. The overall effectiveness rating for communication about change, combining the percentages for the "Somewhat" and "Very Effective" response categories, was 44.5% for the "Did" group and 31.5% for the "Did Not" group.
4. 28.7% of respondents in the "Did" group reported that group meetings were "Very Often" or "Almost Always" well planned, compared to 17.1% for the "Did Not" group.
5. The most striking contrast concerned the overall effectiveness ratings of superior-subordinate communication. The combined percentages

for the "Somewhat Effective" and "Very Effective" response categories were 70.4% for the "Did" group and 48.5% for the "Did Not" group.

The remaining results were inconclusive. In some instances the "Did Not" group enjoyed a slight advantage, but never to a significant degree (which I arbitrarily defined as a minimum of twelve percentage points). On the surface, these results appear to give some grounds for optimism concerning the value of communication training, since the organizations that conducted communication training programs did seem to be communicating better than those that did not. But the data are too scattered and the number of variables too numerous to attempt any finite analysis.

CONCLUSION

That completes a highlighting of key results, but before concluding, a few additional observations seem to be in order.

The most striking fact that I detected "out there" is the extent and intensity of change. Most interviewees expressed concern over how to communicate the changes that must be made for the organization to survive in an increasingly competitive and unpredictable business world. The most common changes that I encountered involved "cost cutting," "lay offs", "mergers," "plant closings," and other measures designed to keep the business afloat. Almost one-half of my recorded interviews include horror stories with amazingly similar plots: (1) a major change is about to occur; (2) formal communication about change is extremely poor; (3) the grapevine takes over, with consistently disasterous results for the organization and its employees.

It was interesting to learn how different organizations are responding to the increasingly fickle business environment. Some organizatins have moved <u>all</u> decision-making upstairs, producing a totally centralized decision structure

that left most organizational members on the periphery. The morale in such organizations was extremely low. The turnover of marketable people was high. The prognosis for future health was poor indeed.

Another approach to dealing with change and unpredictability could have as easily come from Peters' and Waterman's best seller In Search of Excellence as it did from the mouths of the interviewees. In the well-run organization, there is an emphasis on clear definitions of goals and responsibilities, out-of-channel communication, and building commitment to quality and productivity. The central concern is motivation. The strategies being used to motivate employees can be inferred from these recurring buzz words: "participatory management," "employee involvement," "individual competence and accountability," "joint goals-setting," "quality circles," "decentralization," and "two-way communication" (that's up as well as down).

Some large companies are breaking down into a cluster of smaller companies. They feel that autonomy within the framework of uniform general policies and performance goals brings the benefit of a small, close-knit organization. It may be true that "smaller is better" when it comes to the rapid adjustments that must be made in an atmosphere of exploding technology and an unstable economy.

One respondent from a high technology company said that the useful life of most of their products was now six months; not because of poor quality, but because of rapid developments which produce obsolence at a heretofore unheard of pace. And he wasn't talking about modifying old products in a six-month cycle; he meant designing and producing a replacement. In such an atmosphere, bureaucratic controls and cumbersome vertical communication networks would guarantee bankruptcy.

Given the tendencies toward horizontal communication at all levels, decentralization, employee participation, and the increasing use of small group communication (as in quality circles and project teams), it would appear that members of business organizations at all levels could benefit from communication training programs. So I have renewed hope for the field of communication. Its teachings have never been more relevant or more urgently needed.

But I know that it's also up to us in the academic world to "communicate" with the business world. I want to encourage this form of real world reseach for those college teachers who are interested in facilitating transfer of learning from the classroom to the other reality of the changing, evolving, demanding work organization. In this way, college teachers of organizational communication can develop an increasing supply of "communication wise" college graduates who will facilitiate, not block, the efforts of those human resource professionals and line managers who are trying to build an open, efficient communication system. That's one sure way to achieve the high morale and productivity that work organizations will need to meet the stiff challenges of the next decade.

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TABLE 1

Perceptions of Effectiveness of Four Types of Network Communication

Question: "Overall, how would you rate the following types of communication in your organization?"

TYPE	RATING			
	Very Ineffective	Somewhat Ineffective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective
Formal Upward	*10 (6.7)	44 (29.3)	77 (51.3)	19 (12.7)
Formal Downward	6 (14.0)	20 (13.3)	87 (58.0)	37 (24.7)
Formal Horizontal	3 (2.0)	20 (13.3)	101 (67.3)	26 (17.3)
Informal Horizontal	6 (4.0)	31 (20.7)	75 (50.0)	38 (25.3)

*In this and all subsequent tables, the first number is the total of responses in that category, and the number in parentheses is the percentage of total responses in the category.

TABLE 2

Communication of Negative Information Upward

Question: "How frequently do subordinates share information about their own mistakes with their superiors?" Responses	Response Categories	Question: "How often do subordinates give feedback to their superiors concerning their superiors' mistakes?" Responses
16 (10.7)	Almost Never (0-5%)	55 (36.7)
72 (48.0)	Sometimes (5-30%)	62 (41.3)
39 (26.0)	Often (30-70%)	23 (15.3)
22 (14.7)	Very Often (70-95%)	8 (5.3)
0 (0.0)	Almost Always (95-100%)	1 (.7)

TABLE 3

Responses to Two Questions Concerning the Effectiveness of Upward Communication

Question: "When messages are sent upward through formal channels, how frequently does the receiver respond to the message?"

Almost Never	(0-5%)	1 (.7)	Very Often	(70-95%)	46 (32.0)
Sometimes	(5-30%)	31 (20.7)			
Often	(30-70%)	45 (30.)	Almost Always	(95-100%)	25 (16.7

Question: "To what extent are employees encouraged by management to send messages upward in the organization?"

Very Little	15 (10.0)	Great	59 (39.3)
Little	49 (32.7)	Very Great	27 (18.0)

TABLE 4

Responses to Four Questions Concerning
Downward and Horizontal Communication

Preface to all four questions: "When messages are sent downward/horizontally through channels, how frequently:"

"Does the message arrive on time?"

Responses (Downward)	Response Categories	Responses (Horizontally)
0 (0)	Almost Never	2 (1.3)
22 (14.7)	Sometimes	9 (6.0)
39 (26.7)	Often	52 (34.7)
55 (36.7)	Very Often	60 (40.0)
34 (22.7)	Almost Always	27 (18.0)

"Does the receiver ask for clarification because the message is either incomplete or ambiguous?"

Responses (Downward)	Response Categories	Responses (Horizontally)
27 (18.0)	Almost Never	18 (12.0)
99 (66.0)	Sometimes	99 (66.0)
18 (12.0)	Often	24 (16.0)
5 (3.3)	Very Often	8 (5.3)
1 (.7)	Almost Always	1 (.7)

"Does the receiver question the accuracy of the message?"

Responses (Downward)	Response Categories	Responses (Horizontally)
48 (32.0)	Almost Never	36 (24.0)
89 (59.3)	Sometimes	90 (60.0)
11 (7.3)	Often	18 (12.0)
1 (.7)	Very Often	5 (3.3)
1 (.7)	Almost Always	1 (.7)

"Does the receiver respond to the message?"

Responses (Downward)	Response Categories	Responses (Horizontally)
5 (3.3)	Almost Never	2 (1.3)
25 (16.7)	Sometimes	22 (14.7)
28 (18.7)	Often	48 (32.0)
45 (30.0)	Very Often	51 (34.0)
47 (31.3)	Almost Always	27 (18.0)

TABLE 5

Number of Different Kinds of Changes Occurring in Responding Organizations

	Number of Change Categories Checked					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number of Respondents	5	27	32	39	32	15
Percentage of Total Respondents	3.3	18.0	21.3	26.0	21.3	10.0

TABLE 6

Estimates of Undercommunication and Overcommunication of Information about Change

Question	Information Needed				Information Received				Ratio
	Very Little	Little	Great	Very Great	Very Little	Little	Great	Very Great	
*25	3 (2.0)	23 (15.3)	86 (57.3)	37 (24.7)	24 (16.0)	77 (51.3)	43 (28.7)	5 (3.3)	
		Mean: 3.1				Mean: 2.2			.71
26	1 (.7)	23 (15.3)	85 (56.7)	40 (26.7)	29 (19.3)	67 (44.7)	50 (33.3)	3 (2.0)	
		Mean: 3.1				Mean: 2.2			.71
27	1 (.7)	12 (8.0)	65 (43.3)	71 (47.3)	25 (16.6)	81 (54.0)	32 (21.3)	11 (7.3)	
		Mean: 3.4				Mean: 2.2			.65
28	5 (3.3)	23 (15.3)	71 (47.3)	49 (32.7)	47 (31.3)	63 (42.0)	32 (21.3)	6 (4.0)	
		Mean: 3.1				Mean: 2.0			.65

* The four kinds of information about change appearing in questions 25-28 were:

25. Changes that are being proposed for the organization.

26. Reasons for proposed changes.

27. How changes will affect one's job.

28. How individuals can actively participate in the change process.

TABLE 7

Evaluations of Group Meetings in Terms of Three Criteria

Criterion	Frequency Estimates				
	Almost Never (0-5%)	Sometimes (5-30%)	Often (30-70%)	Very Often (70-95%)	Almost Always (95-100%)
Well-Planned	11 (7.3)	50 (33.3)	50 (33.3)	32 (21.3)	7 (4.7)
Productive	5 (3.3)	50 (33.3)	63 (42.0)	27 (18.0)	5 (3.3)
Decisions Implemented	5 (3.3)	36 (24.0)	65 (43.3)	37 (24.7)	7 (4.7)

TABLE 8

Responses to Three Questions Relating to
Superior-Subordinate Communication

Question	Responses				
	Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Almost Always
*39	2 (1.3)	33 (22.0)	65 (43.3)	45 (30.0)	4 (2.7)
40	3 (2.0)	59 (39.3)	48 (32.0)	35 (23.3)	4 (2.7)
43	19 (12.7)	74 (49.3)	32 (21.3)	23 (15.3)	0 (0)

* The questions were:

When subordinates communicate with their immediate superiors, how frequently—

39. Do subordinates get prompt answers to their questions and suggestions?

40. Do superiors demonstrate awareness of subordinates' feelings and needs?

41. Does the superior respond by arguing instead of listening when a subordinate disagrees?